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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQI GOVERNMENT, CONSTITUTION; BAGHDAD

SUMMARY: Discussions on the Constitution was the major editorial theme of the daily newspapers on August 22, 2005. END SUMMARY.

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SELECTED COMMENTARIES

- [1A. "Constitutional Discussions"](#)
(Al-Adala Newspaper in Arabic P 3 Editorial by Ali Khalif)

"The current discussions on the constitution among the Iraqi politici important step in Iraq's journey to democracy. However, it seems as political group is trying to impose its own agenda on the constitutio who hold political opinions that do not serve the Iraqi national inte those who oppose the idea of federalism in Iraq might have accepted i resources in their own provinces. If we believe in democracy and fre be afraid of federalism . . . But I think that some political groups because of that they try to dominate all other groups. These are the idea of Kurdish federalism while at the same time refuse the concept federal territories in any other part of Iraq . . . Nevertheless, the process represents a great achievement and the Iraqi politicians who in this process must complete the task of drafting a constitution tha Iraqi people. We do not like anyone to make use of this achievement platform to launch bombastic slogans. The Iraqi people want to live want to enjoy their fair share of Iraqi wealth and natural resources.

- [1B. "Why Are We Afraid of Federalism"](#)
(Al-Sabah Newspaper in Arabic p. 2 Editorial By Sa'eed Abdul Hadi)

"Until yesterday, federalism was an obstacle in the way of reaching a constitution draft. As everyone knows there is a Shiite-Kurdish agre However, the Sunnis call for non-centralism of provinces and totally The Arab Sunnis think that federalism will lead to the unfair distrib resources among provinces. We do not know the reason behind such fea politicians unanimously agreed on the distribution of natural resourc media focuses on the positive points of federalism and how important development. The conservative Pan Arab media outlets severely attack Iraq. We feel that they attack federalism in Iraq because they want political establishment. Those establishments would be threatened if succeeded in Iraq . . . The Arab countries are still governed by tyra regimes give a very good picture of what is called as the eastern tyr progressive Arab press opposes the rights of Iraqis to establish thei Administrative federalism in Iraq is necessary because it would resto our many ethnic groups. We must not say bad things about each other. things like; Sunnis refuse federalism because they want to implement project for the sake of our neighbors or accuse the Shiites of being plan in Iraq. These accusations come from those who want to destroy and encourage sectarianism . . . What will the Shiites lose if a cent established that represented the majority in Iraq? What will the mi from having a central government? There must be a national movement honest Arab writers must support this move . . . Iraq is moving forwa democratic process will never stop. Disagreements among Iraq's Shiit Kurds are a healthy point in this process."

- [1C. "The Disagreement Points are Increasing"](#)
(Al-Furat Newspaper in Arabic P 2 Editorial By Majed Fadhel Al-Zaboon

"Despite the Constitution Drafting Committee's announcement that the working on the Constitution have resolved their differences and reach seems that there are still arguing . . . In fact they are still tryin sixty-six different points. How did six points of disagreement turn of disagreement? . . . One of my colleagues thought that members of t Drafting Committee would not be able to read the constitution article electricity where he lives. He lives far away from the Internationa nothing about the concrete walls and unlimited electricity. My other that they should schedule their discussions about the disagreement po with that solution is that Arabs want a schedule according to the Ara the Kurds want the Kurdish alphabetic, the same goes for others polit Ambassador Khalilzad, our American brother, suggested that they use t alphabetic. Everyone respects his wisdom and they liked the idea. Ho to add more articles to the Iraqi constitution draft. When some of t Drafting Committee members protested, he used his veto against them! to do so because the United States is a permanent member in the Inter

Council . . . This is why the members of the Constitution Security Co democratic additions. They accent the federalism, and fit into the are right for Iraq. They were so happy with Ambassador Khalilzad tha him."

*Translators note: the author is actually sarcastically criticizing t writing the Iraqi constitution.

[D](#). "This Morning"
(As-Sabah Al-Jadeed Newspaper in Arabic P. 1 Editorial by Ismael Zayy

"The completed constitution will begin the next stage in our country' do not worry about Qatar. Do not waste time on others issue or other campaigns against us. Go ahead brothers and ensure our children's fut not mean that you should be careless and accept anyone's opinion into But we should stand behind our own opinions about this historical doc establish the basic elements for the government in the new Iraq . . . participate in the referendum and vote for the constitution. It does vote. The most important thing is that we are free to express our op should first read the document and understand what it means. We shou issues raised in this document. Then we are prepared to express our .If we reject any interference in our affairs, and refuse to allow th our land, we should show the world that we are a nation that says wha the courage to express its opinions. Casting a vote on the constituti national, Arab, and international recognition. It is the first step

[E](#). "Dividing Iraq Away from the National Zeal"
(Al-Mashriq Newspaper in Arabic P7 Editorial by Shamil Abdul Qader)

"Some Iraqis have two main ideas about the unity of Iraq. One is tha divided, and two is that dividing Iraq would be an attack against the States to maintain Iraqi unity. However, most Iraqis believe that Ir They think that the governments of Western and Middle Eastern countri all along to divide Iraq for the benefit of Middle Eastern forces. T Iraq and its unity view federalism as a step backward under the prete from a centralized government . . . The former United States Civil Ad Ambassador Paul Bremmer repeated many times that he refused federalis sectarian issues. He maintained that he agreed with geographical fed that Iraq will be turned into 18 federal territories instead of 18 pr understand that Iraq needs a centralized government for security. We Ja'afari's government will give us the centralization of the former r destroy the idea of division. Their anger will come down on the head and on the heads of those who are trying to finance its division."

[F](#). "What is the Argument For the Constitution?"
(Al-Ittihad Newspaper in Arabic P 5 Editorial by Karekar Abdullah Khu

"In today's session of the Transitional National Assembly, the Consti decided or refused . . . In support of the Constitution, many press s issued, and there have been many meetings for the leaders of the poli Everyone is working on the Constitution's controversial issues. The the results to the Iraqi people. However, they are bored with the is another postponement . . . The leaders of the political blocks have i about the significant restrictions facing them. If they are able to the constitution draft, that very act will save Iraq. The completed up new horizons for the Iraqi people and will kick start reconstructi a break from the their current miserable condition . . . When the Pol complete the draft, it will need the approval of the TNA. If the Ass approve the draft the political process goes back to the beginning. to the Iraqi people in many ways. The political, economic, security consequences of a denial will dishearten the people. It will also me of continued suffering, that included a dangerous election, they only benefits . . . The elected National Assembly should have finished the the efforts of the Constitution Drafting Committee by the first deadl reach an accord. That fact compelled the president to have the polit together in order to solve the restrictions . . . The statements are optimistic and some are pessimistic that the document will be finishe the TNA decision will remove these all doubts that the government is future . . . We still optimistic that the TNA will give us our final the draft the country will sink into chaos and face continued foreign internal issues . . . Iraqis want a constitution that will protect th country, and ensure a bright future for their children. We are waitin Assembly to decide the constitution, prepare the referendum and hold

Khalilzad